

Message Text

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ACTION EA-12

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CU-04 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05
H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01
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INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR TE
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY TAIPEI
AMEMBASSY TOKYO
AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE
AMCONSUL HONG KONG
CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L PEKING 0092

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O 11652: GDS
TAGS: CH CB VN PBOR

SUBJ: PRC MEDIA COVERAGE OF THE CAMBODIAN-VIETNAMESE BORDER CONFLICT

REF: A. PEKING 58
B. PEKING 49 C. MOSCOW 0224

1. PRC MEDIA STILL HAVE NOT COMMENTED ON THE CAMBODIAN-VIETNAMESE BORDER CONFLIT AND ARE NOT DEPARTING FROM A PUBLIC SHOW OF NEUTRALITY. THE JANUARY 10 ISSUES OF PEOPLE'S DAILY (P 6) AND GUANGMING DAILY (P 4) CARRIED EXCERPTS FROM THE JANUARY 6 STATEMENTS BY THE CAMBODIAN
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MINISTRY OF PROPAGANDA AND INFORMATION AND THE PRESS AND
INFORMATION DEPARTMENT OF THE VIETNAMESE FOREIGN MINISTRY.

EXCEPTS FROM THE CAMBODIAN STATEMENTDETAIL THE
ALLEGED VIETNAMESE PENETRATION OF CAMBODIA, VIETNAMESE
ATTEMPTS TO FORM AN "INDOCHINA FEDERATION", AND NOTE
CAMBODIA'S REFUSAL TO NEGOTIATE UNTIL VIETNAM WITHDRAWS

ITS TROOPS FROM CAMBODIA. THE REPLAY OF THE VIETNAMESE STATEMENTS CHARGES CAMBODIA WITH VIOLATING THE "SOVEREIGNTY AND TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY OF VIETNAM", UNDERSCORES THE "SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE VIETNAMESE PEOPLE AND THE PEOPLES OF LAOS AND KAMPUCHEA" AND REITERATES VIETNAM'S CALL FOR NEGOTIATIONS. WHILE THE PRC'S TWO LEADING NEWSPAPERS HAVE STILL NOT MENTIONED THE BREAKING OF CAMBODIAN-VIETNAMESE RELATIONS, WE ASSUME THE PRC'S RESTRICTED "REFERENCE NEWS" HAS COVERED THE CONFLICT THROUGH THE REPLAY OF WESTERN PRESS ACCOUNTS.

2. COMMENT: IN ITS REPLAY OF CAMBODIAN AND VIETNAMESE STATEMENTS, PRC MEDIA HAVE BEEN CAREFUL NOT TO IMPLICATE THE SOVIET UNION, NOR HAVE THE CHINESE RESPONDED TO SOVIET CHARGES THAT THE PRC IS BEHIND CAMBODIAN MACHINATIONS. OBVIOUSLY TROUBLED BY THE CONTINUING CONFLICT, PRC LEADERS HAVE BEEN TRYING TO AVOID OPEN IDENTIFICATION WITH THE CAMBODIANS, ALTHOUGH SEVERAL PRC OFFICIALS HAVE PRIVATELY EXPRESSED SUPPORT (REFS A, B). AS EVENTS UNFOLD, HOWEVER, PRC LEADERS WILL PROBABLY FIND IT NECESSARY TO TAKE A POSITION WHICH WILL UNDOUBTEDLY COMPLICATE THEIR ALREADY TROUBLED RELATIONSHIP WITH THE VIETNAMESE.
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